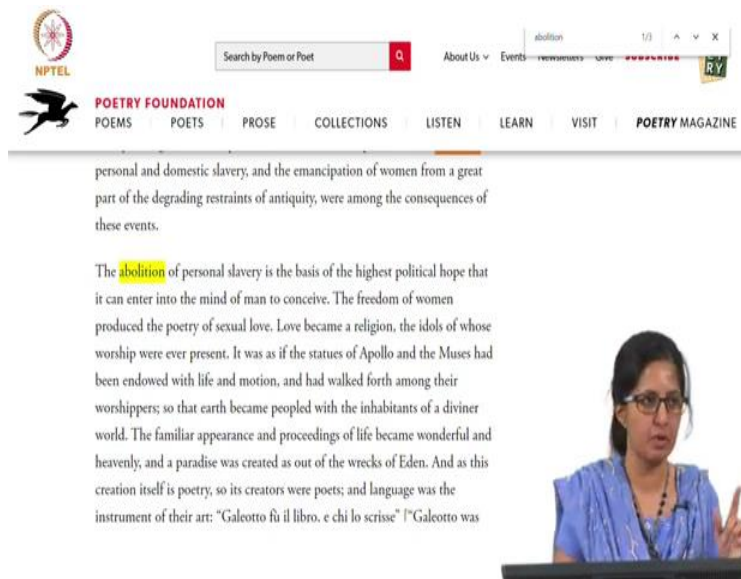


**Literary Criticism (From Plato to Leavis)**  
**Dr. Merin Simi Raj**  
**Dept of Humanities and Social Science**  
**IIT Madras**  
**Shelley's Defence of Poetry Part -3**

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The screenshot shows the Poetry Foundation website. At the top left is the NPTEL logo. A search bar contains the text 'abolition'. Below the search bar is a navigation menu with links for POEMS, POETS, PROSE, COLLECTIONS, LISTEN, LEARN, VISIT, and POETRY MAGAZINE. The main content area displays text from Shelley's 'A Defence of Poetry', with the word 'abolition' highlighted in yellow. The text reads: 'personal and domestic slavery, and the emancipation of women from a great part of the degrading restraints of antiquity, were among the consequences of these events. The abolition of personal slavery is the basis of the highest political hope that it can enter into the mind of man to conceive. The freedom of women produced the poetry of sexual love. Love became a religion, the idols of whose worship were ever present. It was as if the statues of Apollo and the Muses had been endowed with life and motion, and had walked forth among their worshippers; so that earth became peopled with the inhabitants of a diviner world. The familiar appearance and proceedings of life became wonderful and heavenly, and a paradise was created as out of the wrecks of Eden. And as this creation itself is poetry, so its creators were poets; and language was the instrument of their art: "Galeotto fu il libro, e chi lo scrisse" / "Galeotto was

Dr. Merin Simi Raj is shown in a video inset on the right side of the slide, wearing glasses and a blue top, gesturing with her right hand.

We continue to look at this text by Shelley, *A Defence of Poetry*, and we also briefly saw in the first class, how it is not really a defence of poetry in general, but it is a defence of a lot of things which contribute to the production of different kinds of art forms. We realise that this is not a very text-centric kind of a discussion that he initiates from the beginning. He is not particularly talking about individual texts in order to defend or support certain kinds of writing.

And in the course of this, especially in the second half, I feel this is a proper rendition of the Romantic spirit that Shelley entirely embodied. And if you read up about Shelley's life, he has been referred to as Mad Shelley. He had these very exciting phases in life where he also was thrown out of college for writing a piece which was seen as blasphemous. He had an atheistic piece of writing, which was not well received at all. So he was someone who really lived life in the radical terms that Wordsworth perhaps very ideally had articulated in his *Lyrical Ballads*.

So, he continues to be in praise of the contemporary ways in which things are changing, not just in terms of the literary spirit, but in terms of culture, in terms of politics. But at the same time, there is also a very curious way in which, this is something that we do not find in all other Romantic writers, there is a curious way in which he manages to bring in, say, the classical tradition as well as the contemporary tradition when he refers to the writings, when he refers to the spirit that they embodied in general.

So, we have skipped a few things in the first half, we have moved on to the second half of the essay where he first draws attention to this event, the abolition of personal slavery. So there is a section where he ends with saying, “The abolition of personal and domestic slavery, and the emancipation of women from a great part of the degrading restraints of antiquity, were among the consequences of these events”.

He is referring to a lot of our contemporary social, cultural, and religious events and political events which had led to tremendous changes across Europe. We had already noted before we started discussing *Lyrical Ballads*, that the 18<sup>th</sup> century was this year of, this century of revolutions across Europe. So in many ways, England was perhaps the only nation, which contained the outbreak of this revolt in any visible forms, but the entire Europe was literally boiling.

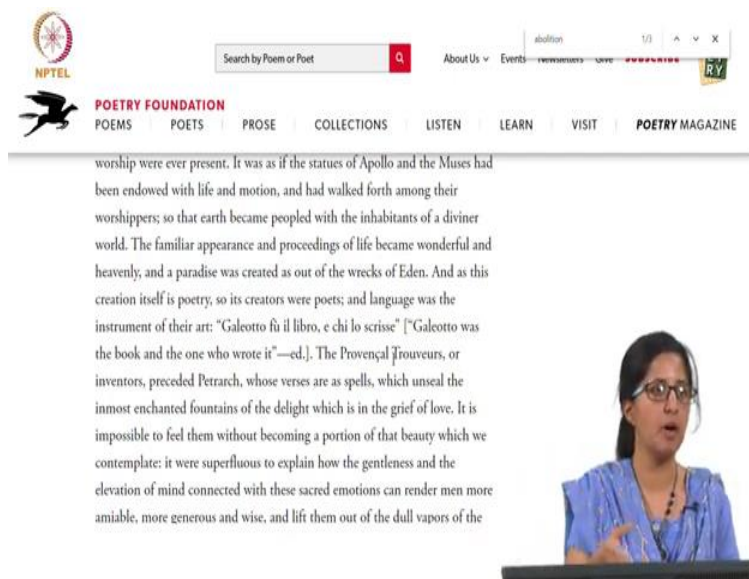
And all these major revolutions were happening throughout the 18<sup>th</sup> century and they continue to become really big in the 19<sup>th</sup> century as we know. So he is paying a very direct tribute to these series of events which he collapses entirely into the statement of the abolition of personal and domestic slavery. He is not really referring to the abolition of slavery in America alone, he is referring to a range of things which were contained, which history had managed to perhaps annihilate forever in terms of different forms of slavery in domestic, in political, in religious, in cultural ways. And he goes on to tell us, “The abolition of personal slavery is the basis of the highest political hope that it can enter into the mind of man to conceive”.

So, he talks about a range of things which becomes possible after this abolition of slavery. He looks at it in a broad political sense. And look at these following statements, “The freedom of women, produced the poetry of sexual love. Love became a religion, the idols of whose worship were ever present. It was as if the statues of Apollo and the Muses had been endowed with life

and motion and had walked forth among their worshipers, so earth became peopled with the inhabitants of a diviner world”.

So he is essentially, and by and large, romanticizing this, but we cannot miss that large point that he is making, how political freedom essentially is not about having a democracy or having a better ruler. It is also about these micro kinds of emancipations which will have a larger reflection in literature like freedom of women producing the poetry of sexual love or love becoming a religion and these divine beings occupying the fictional worlds, these poetical worlds in ways which they could never imagine before.

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The image shows a screenshot of the Poetry Foundation website. At the top left is the NIPTEL logo. The main header features the Poetry Foundation logo and a navigation menu with links for POEMS, POETS, PROSE, COLLECTIONS, LISTEN, LEARN, VISIT, and POETRY MAGAZINE. A search bar is visible with the text "Search by Poem or Poet". Below the header, a paragraph of text is displayed, which is a quote from Shelley's "Prometheus Unbound". The text reads: "worship were ever present. It was as if the statues of Apollo and the Muses had been endowed with life and motion, and had walked forth among their worshippers; so that earth became peopled with the inhabitants of a diviner world. The familiar appearance and proceedings of life became wonderful and heavenly, and a paradise was created as out of the wrecks of Eden. And as this creation itself is poetry, so its creators were poets; and language was the instrument of their art: "Galcotto fu il libro, e chi lo scrisse" ["Galcotto was the book and the one who wrote it"—ed.]. The Provençal trouveurs, or inventors, preceded Petrarch, whose verses are as spells, which unseal the inmost enchanted fountains of the delight which is in the grief of love. It is impossible to feel them without becoming a portion of that beauty which we contemplate: it were superfluous to explain how the gentleness and the elevation of mind connected with these sacred emotions can render men more amiable, more generous and wise, and lift them out of the dull vapors of the". In the bottom right corner of the screenshot, there is a video inset showing a woman with glasses and a blue top speaking.

So, he keeps giving these examples. This is again, one of the things, one of the unique things that Shelley does in comparison to his other contemporaries. His work is littered with a lot of classical references, which also tells us about his scholarship, but it also requires some additional reading for us to make sense of some of the examples that he is giving us. So, in that sense, there is a connection that later, I think, will become more clear to you when we draw this connection between romanticism and modernism, both are very esoteric in certain ways.

There are no universal general examples that he burdens himself with, there is no anxiety to give any universal general examples. But on the other hand, he gives examples which make private sense to him. It is very esoteric in that sense, but it also opens out to the world in terms of trying to draw these extensive parallels across politics, religion, and tying up everything towards what

he himself is doing about this function of poetry, and in this case, trying to do some criticism as well.

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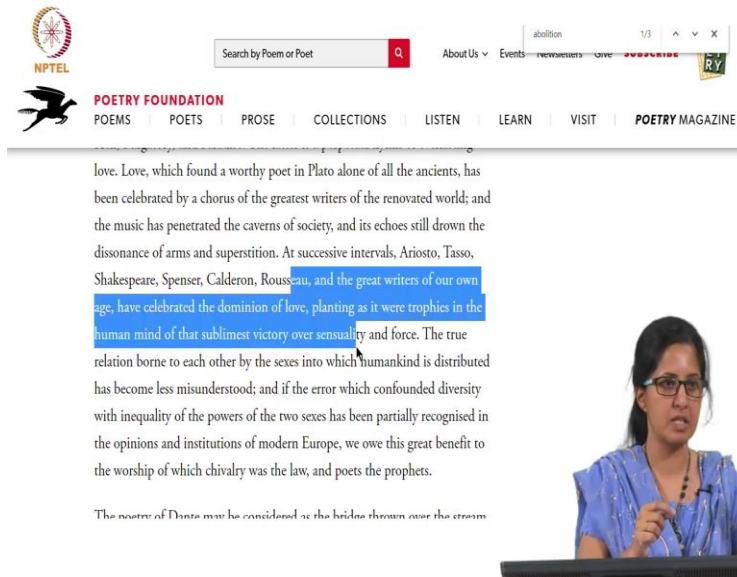


The image shows a screenshot of the Poetry Foundation website. The header includes the NPTEL logo, a search bar with the text "Search by Poem or Poet", and navigation links for "About Us", "Events", "Resources", "Live", and "RY". The main navigation menu lists "POEMS", "POETS", "PROSE", "COLLECTIONS", "LISTEN", "LEARN", "VISIT", and "POETRY MAGAZINE". The main content area features a paragraph of text discussing the role of love in poetry, mentioning Plato, Ariosto, Tasso, Shakespeare, Spenser, Calderon, and Rousseau. Below the text, there is a video overlay of a woman with glasses and a blue top, who appears to be speaking or presenting. The text on the page reads: "love. Love, which found a worthy poet in Plato alone of all the ancients, has been celebrated by a chorus of the greatest writers of the renovated world; and the music has penetrated the caverns of society, and its echoes still drown the dissonance of arms and superstition. At successive intervals, Ariosto, Tasso, Shakespeare, Spenser, Calderon, Rousseau, and the great writers of our own age, have celebrated the dominion of love, planting as it were trophies in the human mind of that sublimest victory over sensuality and force. The true relation borne to each other by the sexes into which humankind is distributed has become less misunderstood; and if the error which confounded diversity with inequality of the powers of the two sexes has been partially recognised in the opinions and institutions of modern Europe, we owe this great benefit to the worship of which chivalry was the law, and poets the prophets." Below this text, it says "The master of Dante may be considered as the bridge thrown over the stream".

So he talks extensively about Dante. “At successive intervals, Ariosto, Tasso, Shakespeare, Spenser, Calderon, Rousseau and the great writers of our own age have celebrated the dominion a love, planting as it were trophies in the human mind of that sublimest victory over sensuality and force”.

Look at these combinations over here. Shakespeare, Spenser, Rousseau, they are all together over here. So there is a transnational quality about it and this combination is very curious.

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The image shows a screenshot of the Poetry Foundation website. The top navigation bar includes the NPTEL logo, a search bar with the text "Search by Poem or Poet", and links for "About Us", "Events", "New Poets", "Live", and "RY". Below the navigation bar, the main content area features a quote from Rousseau about love and poetry. The quote is partially highlighted in blue. A video overlay of a woman with glasses, wearing a blue top, is positioned in the bottom right corner of the screenshot, appearing to be speaking or presenting.

Rousseau is a political writer, as you know. And Shakespeare and Spencer, they belong to particular literary traditions. There is no way in which traditionally both can be combined. But in the Romantic spectrum, within this movement, the way they look at politics, the way they look at literature, the way they look at religion, they are all intertwined with one another. That is perhaps, one of the greatest radical thoughts of that period where you cannot differentiate one from the other.

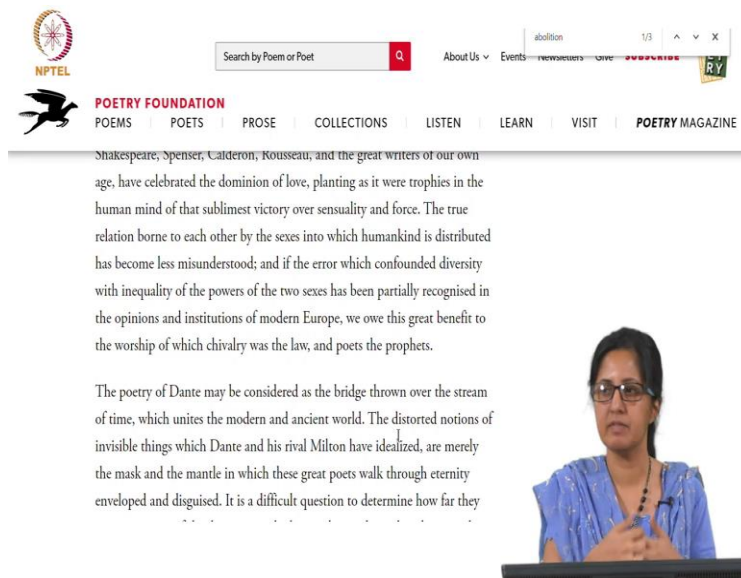
The radicalism in language is an extension of the radicalism that you see in politics, the radicalism in certain kinds of contents. If there is sexual love manifested in women's writings, that is also an extension of the abolition of personal slavery. So, these threads, which were always together, they are being made visible in this discourse.

And the political writings which were seen as a different discourse altogether, if you remember this dichotomy between the kind of prose writings which could instruct and the kind of writings, largely poetical, which could delight. Those were seen as two different strands and poetry always had to be something which would instruct through pleasing.

So here we find these barriers being broken down entirely when he brings together these otherwise odd set of discourses together. This piece of writing, it ends with this oft-quoted statement that poets are “the unacknowledged legislators of the world”. So here, in various points

in this piece of writing, he brings together these otherwise disparate discourses together like he says over here,

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The screenshot shows the Poetry Foundation website. At the top left is the NPTEL logo. Below it is the Poetry Foundation logo, which includes a stylized bird. To the right of the logo is a search bar with the text "Search by Poem or Poet" and a red search button. Further right is a navigation menu with links for "About Us", "Events", "Newspapers", "Live", and "Poetry Magazine". Below the navigation menu is a horizontal line. Underneath the line, there is text that reads: "Shakespeare, Spenser, Calderon, Rousseau, and the great writers of our own age, have celebrated the dominion of love, planting as it were trophies in the human mind of that sublimest victory over sensuality and force. The true relation borne to each other by the sexes into which humankind is distributed has become less misunderstood; and if the error which confounded diversity with inequality of the powers of the two sexes has been partially recognised in the opinions and institutions of modern Europe, we owe this great benefit to the worship of which chivalry was the law, and poets the prophets." Below this text is another paragraph: "The poetry of Dante may be considered as the bridge thrown over the stream of time, which unites the modern and ancient world. The distorted notions of invisible things which Dante and his rival Milton have idealized, are merely the mask and the mantle in which these great poets walk through eternity enveloped and disguised. It is a difficult question to determine how far they". In the bottom right corner of the screenshot, a woman with glasses and a blue top is visible, appearing to be speaking or presenting.

“We owe this great benefit to the worship of which chivalry was the law, and poets the prophets”. It was always the poet being seen as this diviner, the poet being seen as a prophet, the seer, that was always the classical kind of rhetoric. But he also brings in certain modern institutions, certain modern tools to talk about poetry. Like law, for instance, law is a very modern invention, as we know. It is part of Enlightenment, it is part of the identification of the person, the human as an individual; it is about rights.

So these different discourses are being brought together quite seamlessly, without even bothering to give a preface about these things.

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The screenshot shows the Poetry Foundation website. At the top left is the NPTEL logo. A search bar contains the text "Search by Poem or Poet". To the right of the search bar are navigation links: "About Us", "Events", "Viewers", "Live", and "R/Y". Below the search bar is the "POETRY FOUNDATION" logo and a navigation menu with links for "POEMS", "POETS", "PROSE", "COLLECTIONS", "LISTEN", "LEARN", "VISIT", and "POETRY MAGAZINE". A quote is displayed on the page: "the worship of which enaviary was the law; and poets the propnets." Below the quote is a paragraph of text: "The poetry of Dante may be considered as the bridge thrown over the stream of time, which unites the modern and ancient world. The distorted notions of invisible things which Dante and his rival Milton have idealized, are merely the mask and the mantle in which these great poets walk through eternity enveloped and disguised. It is a difficult question to determine how far they were conscious of the distinction which must have subsisted in their minds between their own creeds and that of the people. Dante at least appears to wish to mark the full extent of it by placing Rhipæus, whom Vergil calls *justissimus unus* [the one most just—ed.], in Paradise, and observing a most heretical caprice in his distribution of rewards and punishments. And Milton's poem contains within itself a philosophical refutation of that system, of which, by a strange and natural antithesis, it has been a chief popular support. Nothing". Overlaid on the right side of the screenshot is a video of a woman with glasses, wearing a blue patterned top, pointing upwards with her right hand.

And look at the way in which he tries to situate Dante over here. Dante is not removed in this discourse from what is modern, “The poetry of Dante may be considered as the bridge thrown over the stream of time, which unites the modern and ancient world. The distorted notions of invisible things which Dante and his rival Milton have idealised are merely the mask and mantle in which these great poets walk through eternity, enveloped and disguised”. So we may agree or disagree with some of the notions and some of the opinions that he has in terms of his observations about Dante, about Milton, which we can find here and there in this entire text.

But what I find most interesting is, unlike the other two texts that we have examined already, *Lyrical Ballads*, which is seen as this iconic inaugural text in terms of inaugurating the Romantic critical movement and Coleridge’s *Biographia Literaria*, which is again about the kind of poems and the kind of contents which were brought together and that was examining it from a philosophical point of view. I think this text addresses, gets to the heart of the question in multiple ways.

The only disadvantage as you may have already felt, it is very long drawn and if it were broken down into different pieces perhaps, it would have been become more palatable in an academic, classroom sense as well. So but he actually gets to the heart of the question in many ways, does



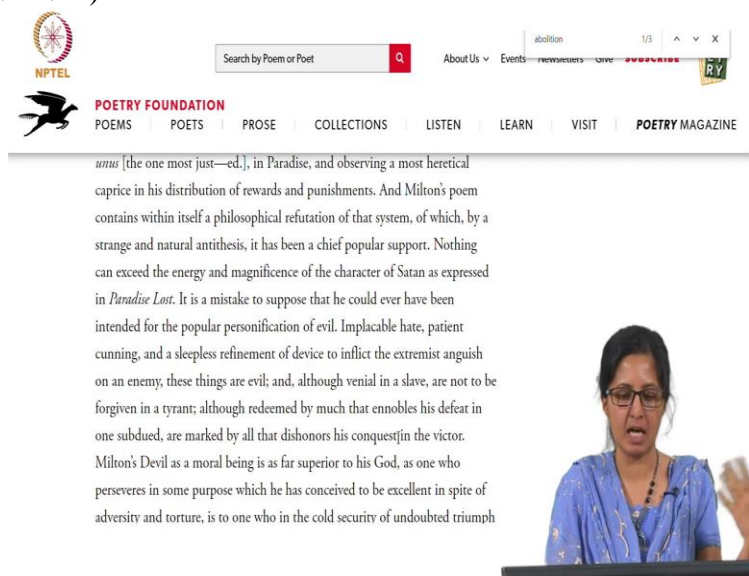
not digress into say minor issues such as the language used or the philosophy which was behind certain kinds of poetical objectives, poetical objects.

So, it directly talks about the connection, which originally perhaps, even Wordsworth had in mind, but never wanted to articulate it for various reasons, the connection between contemporary politics and how that revolution also got infused into the many cultural manifestations including poetry. And here, there is no way in which Shelley distinguishes between what was written earlier and what is written now, if there is something which could bridge the gap of time, then he is willing to use it.

Chronology becomes only incidental as we can see over here. And the emphasis is more on continuity rather than entirely breaking away from the tradition and inaugurating something else altogether. That is how, by looking at things through such a scheme of things, that is how he is able to look at Dante, the poetry of Dante as something which unites, which has the power to unite the modern and the ancient world.

The dichotomies we see are beginning to break down in various different ways. And this also, we will soon come to that, there is a way in which we find that in spite of this radical revolutionary strain that he continues to exhibit in this work, there is also a framework of morality within which he continues to work. And he rationalises that as well, we will discuss that as when we come to it.

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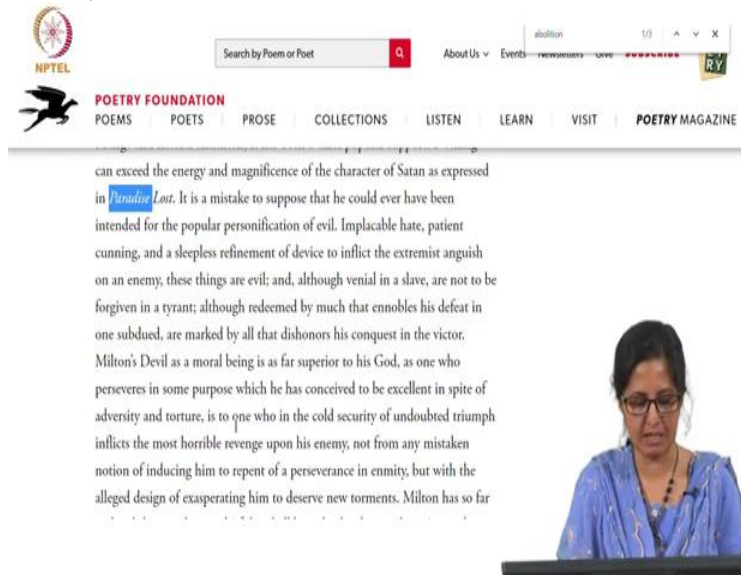


The image shows a screenshot of the Poetry Foundation website. At the top left is the NPTEL logo. The main navigation bar includes 'POETRY FOUNDATION' and links for 'POEMS', 'POETS', 'PROSE', 'COLLECTIONS', 'LISTEN', 'LEARN', 'VISIT', and 'POETRY MAGAZINE'. A search bar contains the text 'abolition'. Below the navigation bar, a paragraph of text from Milton's *Paradise Lost* is visible, starting with 'unus [the one most just—ed.], in Paradise, and observing a most heretical caprice in his distribution of rewards and punishments. And Milton's poem contains within itself a philosophical refutation of that system, of which, by a strange and natural antithesis, it has been a chief popular support. Nothing can exceed the energy and magnificence of the character of Satan as expressed in *Paradise Lost*. It is a mistake to suppose that he could ever have been intended for the popular personification of evil. Implacable hate, patient cunning, and a sleepless refinement of device to inflict the extremist anguish on an enemy, these things are evil; and, although venial in a slave, are not to be forgiven in a tyrant; although redeemed by much that ennobles his defeat in one subdued, are marked by all that dishonors his conquest [in the victor]. Milton's Devil as a moral being is as far superior to his God, as one who perseveres in some purpose which he has conceived to be excellent in spite of adversity and torture, is to one who in the cold security of undoubted triumph'. In the bottom right corner, there is a video inset showing a woman with glasses and a blue patterned top speaking.



And this engagement with past works; he talks about Milton in very commendable ways. “Nothing can exceed the energy and magnificence of the character of Satan as expressed in *Paradise Lost*. It is a mistake to suppose that he could ever have been intended for the popular personification of evil.

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The image is a screenshot of a video player on the Poetry Foundation website. The website header includes the NPTEL logo, a search bar, and navigation links for POEMS, POETS, PROSE, COLLECTIONS, LISTEN, LEARN, VISIT, and POETRY MAGAZINE. The video player shows a woman with glasses and a blue top speaking. The text overlaid on the video is a quote from Milton's Paradise Lost: "can exceed the energy and magnificence of the character of Satan as expressed in Paradise Lost. It is a mistake to suppose that he could ever have been intended for the popular personification of evil. Implacable hate, patient cunning, and a sleepless refinement of device to inflict the extremist anguish on an enemy, these things are evil; and, although venial in a slave, are not to be forgiven in a tyrant; although redeemed by much that ennobles his defeat in one subdued, are marked by all that dishonors his conquest in the victor. Milton's Devil as a moral being is as far superior to his God, as one who perseveres in some purpose which he has conceived to be excellent in spite of adversity and torture, is to one who in the cold security of undoubted triumph inflicts the most horrible revenge upon his enemy, not from any mistaken notion of inducing him to repent of a perseverance in enmity, but with the alleged design of exasperating him to deserve new torments. Milton has so far

Implacable hate, patient cunning, and a sleepless refinement of device to inflict the extremist anguish on an enemy; these things are evil, and, although venial in a slave, are not to be forgiven in a tyrant; although redeemed by much that ennobles his defeat in one subdued, are marked by all that dishonours his conquest in the victor.

Milton's Devil as a moral being is as far superior to his God, as one, who perseveres in some purpose, which he has conceived to be excellent in spite of adversity and torture, is to one, who in the cold security of undoubted triumph, inflicts the most horrible revenge upon his enemy". He goes on. So this is a very problematic statement as you can see. Milton's Devil as a moral being is as far superior to his God.

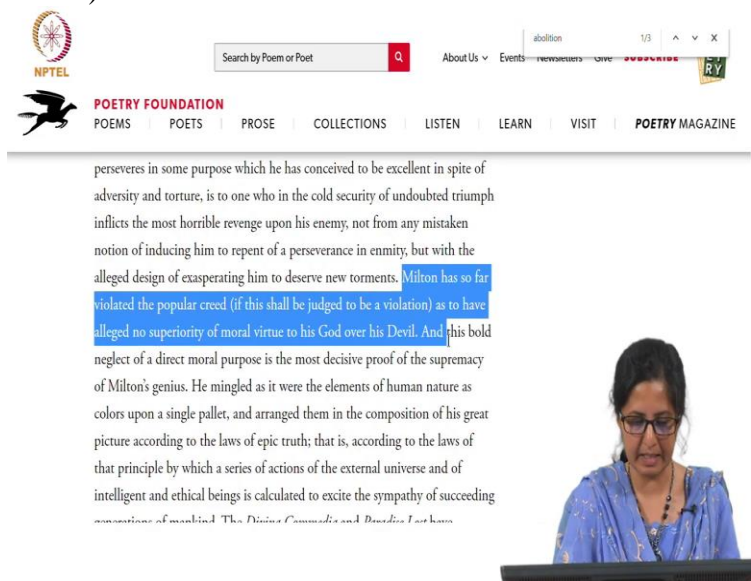
It is ironical, in a certain way it is blasphemous, but at the same time, it is doing the right thing in terms of the literariness of it. So, he is also trying to tell us, the Romantic critical movement, is also trying to tell us that it is proper to do, it is possible to do an appropriate kind of criticism even if you are not in tandem with the belief systems of that time. Because this is a statement

which could have earned perhaps a burned-at-stake status for Shelley, had he written these about 200 years back.

So, there is a possibility to articulate this. And we do not have to go that far back, even Johnson, when he was writing, he was very careful about judging the moral world that Shakespeare had created. Johnson's preface talks about it, how it was not entirely edifying, some of those things were not entirely edifying. And when Dryden was writing a preface to a translation of Chaucer, he did not want to include *The Wife of Bath's Tale* and *The Knight's Tale* because of the bawdiness, because of the licentiousness that those texts had.

So they were always conscious of these overlaps and they wanted to stay clear of it. So the Romantic movement in general and here precisely Shelley's words also encourage us to trespass these boundaries, but also that in that process, the literariness, the critical quality gets further strengthened, the critical faculties also get strengthened over here. Nothing is being compromised in the name of religion or in the name of propriety, as it were in the previous time.

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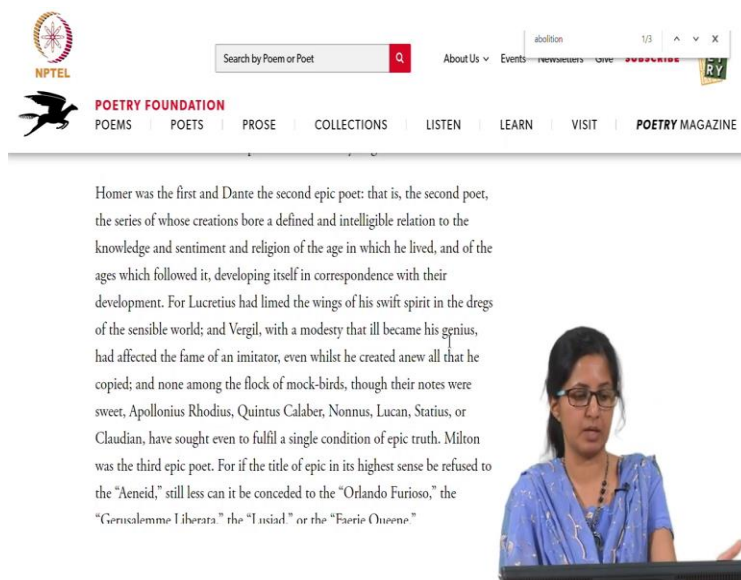
The screenshot shows the Poetry Foundation website. At the top left is the NPTEL logo. A search bar contains the text 'abolition'. Below the search bar is the Poetry Foundation logo and a navigation menu with links for POEMS, POETS, PROSE, COLLECTIONS, LISTEN, LEARN, VISIT, and POETRY MAGAZINE. The main content area displays a paragraph of text from Milton's *Paradise Lost*, with a blue highlight over the sentence: "Milton has so far violated the popular creed (if this shall be judged to be a violation) as to have alleged no superiority of moral virtue to his God over his Devil. And this bold neglect of a direct moral purpose is the most decisive proof of the supremacy of Milton's genius." In the bottom right corner, there is a video player showing a woman with glasses and a blue patterned top speaking.

“Milton has so far violated the popular creed, as to have alleged no superiority of moral virtue to his God over his Devil”. This is certainly something we do not know whether Milton himself would have owned up to it. Of course, the text apparently is lost, many have talked about this since this time.

But though we do not know whether Milton himself would have owned up this claim entirely, this sort of a criticism becomes more possible. I think that is something which the English critical stream did not have any claim on until that point of time. They were trying to get out of the shackles of religion, but they also wanted to stay safe in terms of not really overstepping their boundaries in any way.

So this is a properly radical revolutionary moment in terms of literature, as well as criticism when you look at the range of works, the range of manifestations which came out since *Lyrical Ballads*. So I hope the thread is also beginning to make more sense to you when you look at the trajectory from *Lyrical Ballads* onwards where different kinds of revolutionary zeal are being exhibited by different poets. We may not find everything together in one single poet, but the revolution in language was as much important as perhaps, a revolution in this sort of articulation becomes important.

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The screenshot shows the Poetry Foundation website. At the top left is the NPTEL logo. A search bar contains the text "Search by Poem or Poet". To the right, there are navigation links for "About Us", "Events", "Newsletters", and "Give". Below the search bar is the "POETRY FOUNDATION" logo and a navigation menu with links for "POEMS", "POETS", "PROSE", "COLLECTIONS", "LISTEN", "LEARN", "VISIT", and "POETRY MAGAZINE". The main content area displays a paragraph of text discussing Milton's place in the history of epic poetry, comparing him to Homer and Dante. A video inset in the bottom right corner shows a woman with glasses and a blue patterned top speaking.

Homer was the first and Dante the second epic poet: that is, the second poet, the series of whose creations bore a defined and intelligible relation to the knowledge and sentiment and religion of the age in which he lived, and of the ages which followed it, developing itself in correspondence with their development. For Lucretius had limed the wings of his swift spirit in the dregs of the sensible world; and Vergil, with a modesty that ill became his genius, had affected the fame of an imitator, even whilst he created anew all that he copied; and none among the flock of mock-birds, though their notes were sweet, Apollonius Rhodius, Quintus Calaber, Nonnus, Lucan, Statius, or Claudian, have sought even to fulfil a single condition of epic truth. Milton was the third epic poet. For if the title of epic in its highest sense be refused to the "Aeneid," still less can it be conceded to the "Orlando Furioso," the "Gerusalemme Liberata," the "Iliad," or the "Faerie Queene."

There is a lot of discussion that he has about Homer and Dante. Homer was the first and Dante, the second epic poet. And that is another confident way of being able to talk, being able to bring together say, a classical artist, a classical writer, as well as a contemporary writer in the same frame. There is no anxiety over here. This is not like during the neoclassical time where they had to say, see, maybe Shakespeare has violated a few things, but he is definitely the best.

Maybe Shakespeare did not have this, but given that he was working with a different time and with a different set of raw material altogether, he is definitely the best. There is no anxiety over here to continue to prove that the English literary tradition is the best compared to the classical times. There is a seamless way in which he is able to engage with Milton as well as Dante in the same frame.

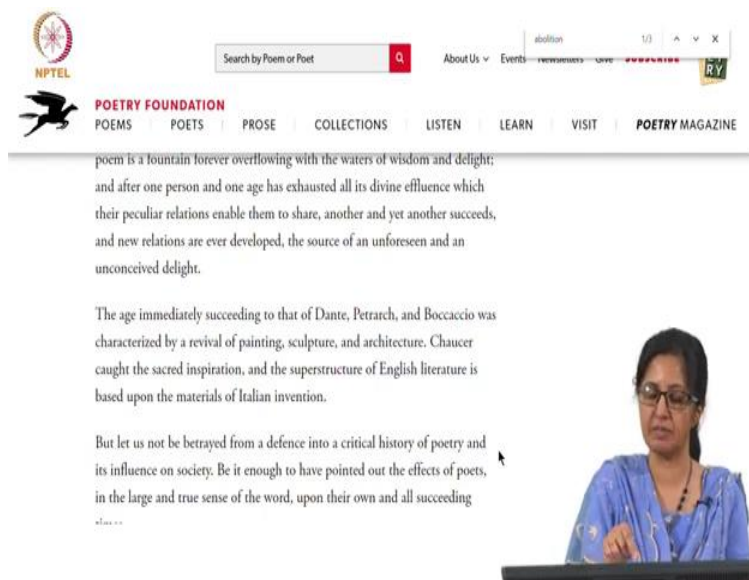
So, I just want to bring this point also to you. When Dryden was translating Chaucer, he has this comparison, there is a preface where he compares Ovid's works with Chaucer's works. He begins with a note of comparison, and then he ends up elevating Chaucer over Ovid for all the right reasons. And he also says that Chaucer was working at a time when language was still in its infancy. But Ovid was writing at a time when the Roman tongue had already reached its perfection.

So, after Ovid, we do not find any stellar work coming out in Roman literature. But with Chaucer, there is an inauguration that happened. There is a way in which he is identified as a starting point. And from that state of infancy, our English literary tradition has produced much.

So this anxiety was always there within the neoclassical framework of understanding literature in the chronological sense. And looking at literatures from different parts of the world. They always wanted to present the English writers as the best in comparison to the classical writers or in comparison to the other European writers. We do not find that anxiety at work in any of these Romantic writers.

They have the confidence and that is also a confidence that they have received through tradition, because there is no need for them to get defensive over particular kinds of traditions or get anxious about being overshadowed by another tradition or by another language that is also there. But we do find that within the critical framework, there is a space to discuss things transnationally and looking at the larger thematic things based on say the political, cultural or other religious frameworks. Let us skip some of those discussions on Dante and Homer that also tells us about the view that Shelley had towards poetry in general.

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The screenshot shows the Poetry Foundation website. At the top left is the NPTEL logo. A search bar contains the text "abolition". The navigation menu includes "POEMS", "POETS", "PROSE", "COLLECTIONS", "LISTEN", "LEARN", "VISIT", and "POETRY MAGAZINE". The main content area displays a quote: "poem is a fountain forever overflowing with the waters of wisdom and delight; and after one person and one age has exhausted all its divine effluence which their peculiar relations enable them to share, another and yet another succeeds, and new relations are ever developed, the source of an unforeseen and an unconceived delight." Below this is a paragraph: "The age immediately succeeding to that of Dante, Petrarch, and Boccaccio was characterized by a revival of painting, sculpture, and architecture. Chaucer caught the sacred inspiration, and the superstructure of English literature is based upon the materials of Italian invention." A third paragraph begins: "But let us not be betrayed from a defence into a critical history of poetry and its influence on society. Be it enough to have pointed out the effects of poets, in the large and true sense of the word, upon their own and all succeeding". A video overlay on the right shows a woman in a blue shirt speaking.

And now, just the way he could bring together different discourses and different narratives, he is also able to bring together different artistic expressions. “The age immediately succeeding to that of Dante, Petrarch and Boccaccio was characterised by a revival in painting, sculpture and architecture. Chaucer caught the sacred inspiration, and the superstructure of English literature is based upon the materials of Italian invention”.

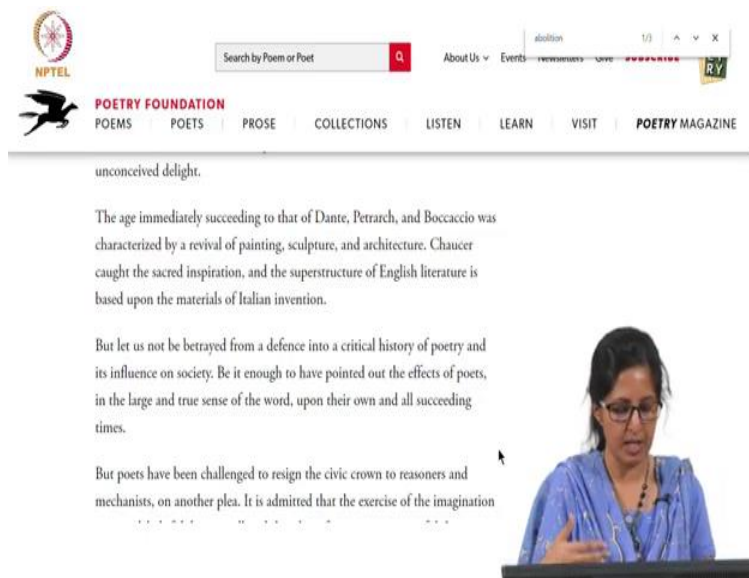
So, look at the trajectory that he is drawing. It is almost like redrawing literary history outside the boundaries of the geographical limitations. Chaucer becomes a descendant of Dante, Petrarch and Boccaccio over here. And also in terms of genres, in between there is painting, sculpture and architecture, and Chaucer catches on from that inspiration.

So there is no anxiety here in locating Chaucer as the descendant of these variety of impulses which are not essentially “English”. And this movement becomes, this rhetoric, this discourse itself becomes possible only because of these multiple revolutionary things that are happening during the time which Shelley is living.

And if you know about the way in which the Romantic poets worked, they also engaged with these different disciplines at the same time. The “Ode to a Grecian Urn” shows an evident interest in archaeology, and painting was something that endlessly fascinated them. So, this fusion becomes possible, entirely during that time.

And we so far have taken a look at most of the representative original works which were iconic in terms of defining English criticism. We have not found this sort of an amalgamation, this sort of an ease of transaction across national boundaries and across discourses until this point of time. And he is also aware of what he is doing.

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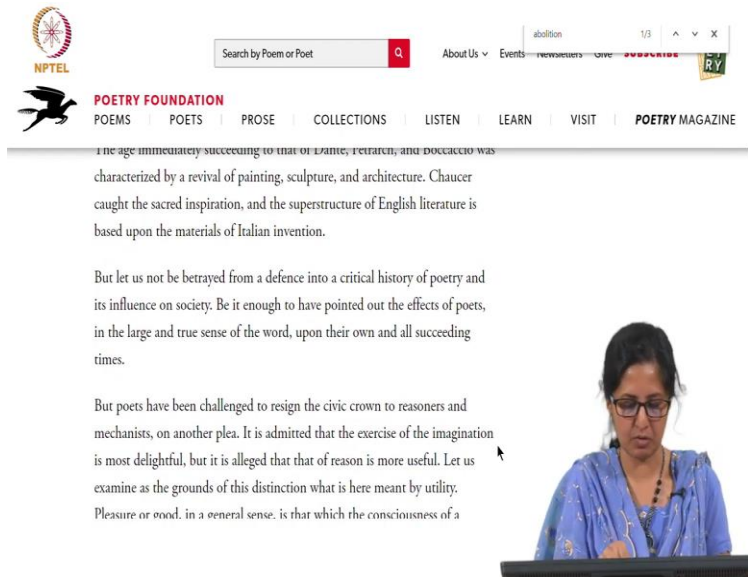


The screenshot shows the Poetry Foundation website. The header includes the NPTEL logo, a search bar with the text "Search by Poem or Poet", and navigation links for "About Us", "Events", "Resources", "Live", and "RY". The main navigation menu lists "POEMS", "POETS", "PROSE", "COLLECTIONS", "LISTEN", "LEARN", "VISIT", and "POETRY MAGAZINE". The main content area displays the text: "unconceived delight. The age immediately succeeding to that of Dante, Petrarch, and Boccaccio was characterized by a revival of painting, sculpture, and architecture. Chaucer caught the sacred inspiration, and the superstructure of English literature is based upon the materials of Italian invention. But let us not be betrayed from a defence into a critical history of poetry and its influence on society. Be it enough to have pointed out the effects of poets, in the large and true sense of the word, upon their own and all succeeding times. But poets have been challenged to resign the civic crown to reasoners and mechanists, on another plea. It is admitted that the exercise of the imagination". A video inset in the bottom right corner shows a woman with glasses and a blue top speaking.

“Let us not be betrayed from a defence into a critical history of poetry and its influence on society”. So that is what he began with. The original point that he began with was defence of poetry. Now, he is saying, let us not move into a critical history of poetry and its influence on society. So, the sections preceding this passage was actually a deliberate way in which he was also trying to give us a critical history of poetry and its influence on society.

“Be it enough to have pointed out the effects of poets, in the large and true sense of the word, upon their own and all succeeding times. But poets have been challenged to resign the civic crown to reasoners and mechanists on another plea”.

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The screenshot shows the Poetry Foundation website. At the top left is the NPTEL logo. The main navigation bar includes 'POETRY FOUNDATION' and links for 'POEMS', 'POETS', 'PROSE', 'COLLECTIONS', 'LISTEN', 'LEARN', 'VISIT', and 'POETRY MAGAZINE'. A search bar contains the text 'abolition'. Below the navigation bar, there is a paragraph of text: 'The age immediately succeeding to that of Dante, Petrarch, and Boccaccio was characterized by a revival of painting, sculpture, and architecture. Chaucer caught the sacred inspiration, and the superstructure of English literature is based upon the materials of Italian invention.' Below this is another paragraph: 'But let us not be betrayed from a defence into a critical history of poetry and its influence on society. Be it enough to have pointed out the effects of poets, in the large and true sense of the word, upon their own and all succeeding times.' A third paragraph follows: 'But poets have been challenged to resign the civic crown to reasoners and mechanists, on another plea. It is admitted that the exercise of the imagination is most delightful, but it is alleged that that of reason is more useful. Let us examine as the grounds of this distinction what is here meant by utility. Pleasure or good, in a general sense, is that which the consciousness of a' The text is partially obscured by a woman in a blue patterned top who is speaking and gesturing with her hand.

So this is the ongoing debate that he also tries to engage with, but not in very central terms about this debate between reason and imagination. And of course, during the Romantic time, they do very boldly place imagination over everything else, everything else takes a second seat and they are not apologetic in announcing that the end result, the end towards which poetry is working, that is pleasure, nothing other than that.

But this is also very interesting, to notice that while the Romantic poets are very bold and unapologetic in stating that we are pursuing pleasure and our aim is to deliver pleasure to the readers, they also seem to be the most committed in terms of their responses to the society, compared to the others who always wanted to maintain a distance from the court, from the politics of those times, or perhaps do things which would obviously give them some favour in terms of their relation with the court, with the political centres.

We do not find the Romantic poets doing that at all. They are not under the patronage of anyone, which works very well to their advantage. They are writing in a more modernised kind of system of literary circuit. But also we noticed that their affiliations are not dependent on anything dictated by the church or by the state. They are the ones who are able to directly say we are pursuing pleasure, that we are not here to teach or to persuade.



And that itself, I hope you are able to see the inherent irony over here, the moment the artists get the courage to state that this is entirely about pleasure, we are not worried about teaching the right or the wrong thing, that is also the moment which gives the most political agency to the artists. And you realise that it is again during these times that they are able to see the connection between these different discourses at work and also are further emboldened to articulate those things.

There could be other factors also aiding this process, but the fact that we are seeing this being articulated very directly within the space of literary criticism, it tells us volumes about the kind of momentum the movement had begun to gain as well.

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The image shows a screenshot of the Poetry Foundation website. At the top left is the NPTEL logo. A search bar contains the text "Search by Poem or Poet". To the right of the search bar are links for "About Us", "Events", and "Contact Us". Below the search bar is a navigation menu with the following items: "POETRY FOUNDATION", "POEMS", "POETS", "PROSE", "COLLECTIONS", "LISTEN", "LEARN", "VISIT", and "POETRY MAGAZINE". The main content area displays a paragraph of text from a poem, which is a critique of the French Revolution. The text reads: "within the limits due to the superior ones. But whilst the sceptic destroys gross superstitions, let him spare to deface, as some of the French writers have defaced, the eternal truths characterised upon the imaginations of men. Whilst the mechanist abridges, and the political economist combines labor, let them beware that their speculations, for want of correspondence with those first principles which belong to the imagination, do not tend, as they have in modern England, to exasperate at once the extremes of luxury and want. They have exemplified the saying, 'To him that hath, more shall be given; and from him that hath not, the little that he hath shall be taken away.' The rich have become richer, and the poor have become poorer; and the vessel of the State is driven between the Scylla and Charybdis of anarchy and despotism. Such are the effects which must ever flow from an unmitigated exercise of the calculating faculty." In the bottom right corner of the screenshot, there is a video inset showing a woman with glasses and a blue top speaking.

So, a lot of these discussions about political economy, about labour, because he is also being very directly influenced by the different political movements happening in the rest of Europe.

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The image shows a screenshot of the Poetry Foundation website. At the top left is the NPTEL logo. A search bar contains the text "abolition". The navigation menu includes "About Us", "Events", "View Poems", "View Poets", "View Prose", "View Collections", "Listen", "Learn", "Visit", and "Poetry Magazine". Below the navigation menu, the text "times." is visible. The main content area features a paragraph of text with several lines highlighted in blue. The highlighted text reads: "But poets have been challenged to resign the civic crown to reasoners and mechanists, on another plea. It is admitted that the exercise of the imagination is most delightful, but it is alleged that that of reason is more useful." To the right of the text is a video inset showing a woman with glasses and a blue patterned top, who appears to be speaking or gesturing.

I want to highlight this as well, when he is talking about imagination and reason: “It is admitted that the exercise of imagination is most delightful, but it is alleged that that of reason is more useful”. So I want you to keep this in mind, from now on this is the argument that he is trying to pursue in a very rational, in a very clinically detached, scientific way, about imagination and reason.

He is trying to break down, unpack these elements, trying to give us some examples from the life of the literary artists and tell us how to put these things in different contexts.

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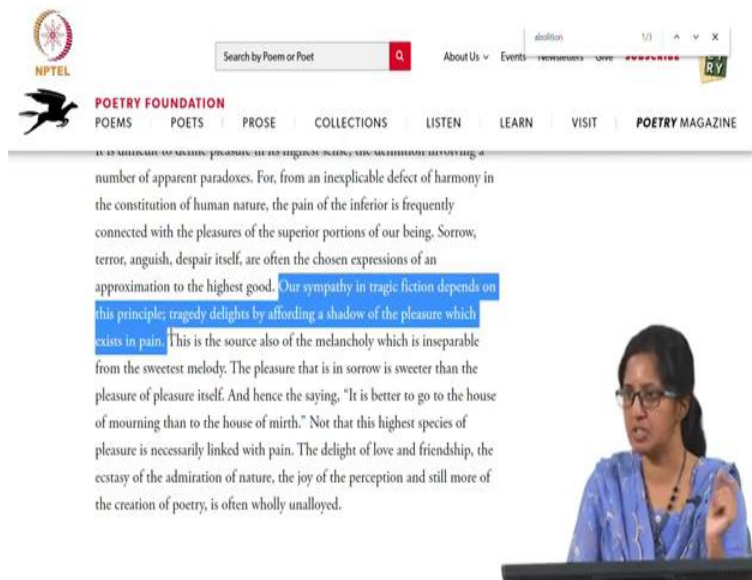
principles which belong to the imagination, do not tend, as they have in modern England, to exasperate at once the extremes of luxury and want. They have exemplified the saying, "To him that hath, more shall be given; and from him that hath not, the little that he hath shall be taken away." The rich have become richer, and the poor have become poorer; and the vessel of the State is driven between the Scylla and Charybdis of anarchy and despotism. Such are the effects which must ever flow from an unmitigated exercise of the calculating faculty.

It is difficult to define pleasure in its highest sense; the definition involving a number of apparent paradoxes. For, from an inexplicable defect of harmony in the constitution of human nature, the pain of the inferior is frequently connected with the pleasures of the superior portions of our being. Sorrow, terror, anguish, despair itself, are often the chosen expressions of an

So he tells us about, of course, you know, they all believe in pleasure, he further highlights it. "It is difficult to define pleasure in its highest sense; the definition involving a number of apparent paradoxes". So, in between, in this same piece of writing, he talks about two kinds of pleasure. One, which is very immediate, very superficial, the other one which is lasting. So, this is again, one differentiation, that the Romantic Movement and the Romantic critics begin to elucidate—that pleasure is not just one kind entirely, it could be of different kinds.

And they themselves, they believe that they are giving out pleasure of the highest order. Good literature is giving out pleasure of the highest order, which is not temporary, which is not immediate, which has a lasting effect. That also ties up with some of the things that even Aristotle spoke about in terms of tragedy having a lasting impact compared to all the other forms, because it has a cathartic effect, which is also, in essence, by extension, we can say that here also he talks about the change which comes about in individuals and societies, we will soon come to that.

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The image shows a screenshot of the Poetry Foundation website. The top navigation bar includes the NPTEL logo, a search bar with the text "Search by Poem or Poet", and links for "About Us", "Events", "Viewers", and "Live". Below the navigation bar, the main menu lists "POEMS", "POETS", "PROSE", "COLLECTIONS", "LISTEN", "LEARN", "VISIT", and "POETRY MAGAZINE". The main content area displays a paragraph of text from a poem, with a blue highlight over the sentence: "Our sympathy in tragic fiction depends on this principle; tragedy delights by affording a shadow of the pleasure which exists in pain." In the bottom right corner, there is a video inset showing a woman with glasses and a blue top speaking.

“Our sympathy in tragic fiction depends on this principle; tragedy delights by affording a shadow of the pleasure which exists in pain”. I think this reorients our understanding of pleasure as well. Pleasure is not something, which is the opposite of pain, but it is a different sort of an experience altogether. Sometimes, if viewing a tragedy, experiencing a tragedy can lead to a cathartic pleasure, we realise that pleasure is not something which can be entirely dismissed.

It is not a superficial thing, it is not something which does not have a lasting impact at all. There is an attempt, a conscious attempt being made over here to elevate pleasure, and to show that, that is not an inferior thing at all. When you are talking about reason being useful, and imagination being something trivial compared to that, if the end of imagination is pleasure, you need not make this a commonsensical argument that the end of imagination is also something very trivial. Pleasure is not something very trivial, it is very deep.

He does not directly get into the philosophical undercurrents of it, but this is something which, if you look at it from the point of view of the classical tradition, this is an argument that you cannot refute. If you look at it from the point of view of the Christian theological tradition, again, it is something that you cannot refute at all, because pain has been seen as something which will essentially edify human character.

So, even within the aspect of Christian theology, it is not as if pain is seen as something terrible, pain is seen as something which will eventually lead to the betterment of the soul itself, which will lead to the betterment of the individual characters as well as the community itself. So, there are these multiple things coming together over here when he is situating pleasure as not the opposite of pain, but as something which gives a long lasting impact on life in general.

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The image shows a screenshot of the Poetry Foundation website. The top navigation bar includes the NPTEL logo, a search bar with the text "Search by Poem or Poet", and a menu with "About Us", "Events", "Viewers", "Live", and "RY". Below the navigation bar, the main content area features a quote from Shelley: "from the sweetest melody. The pleasure that is in sorrow is sweeter than the pleasure of pleasure itself. And hence the saying, 'It is better to go to the house of mourning than to the house of mirth.' Not that this highest species of pleasure is necessarily linked with pain. The delight of love and friendship, the ecstasy of the admiration of nature, the joy of the perception and still more of the creation of poetry, is often wholly unalloyed." Below the quote, there is a video inset of a woman with glasses and a blue patterned top speaking. The text on the page continues: "The production and assurance of pleasure in this highest sense is true utility. Those who produce and preserve this pleasure are poets or poetical philosophers." and "The exertions of Locke, Hume, Gibbon, Voltaire, Rousseau [although Rousseau has been thus classed, he was essentially a poet. The others, even Voltaire, were mere reasoners.—Shelley's note], and their disciples, in favor of

“The production and assurance of pleasure in this highest sense is true utility. Those who produce and preserve this pleasure are poets or poetical philosophers”. So this is how this text also becomes a defence of poetry, by trying to place imagination. So this is in continuation, we can see this in continuation with the rhetoric that we found in Sidney's defence of poetry.

So, there the need was more immediate to showcase that poets are actually not damaging the society, poets are actually not promoting lies, they are not promoting licentiousness behaviour; the need was very different then.

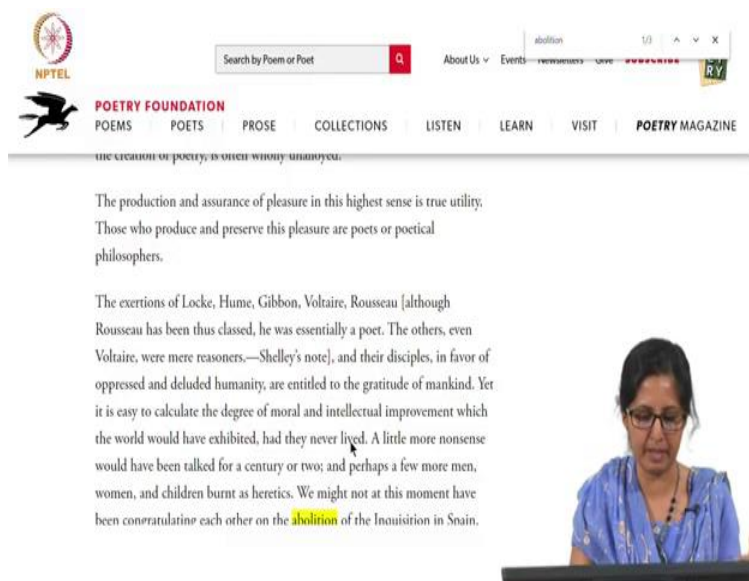
But here, he is taking this to a more profound level by saying that the kind of pleasure which imagination affords, which is the end of imagination too, the result of imagination too, that is not something trivial. On the other hand, there is true utility in it and he is also using the term philosopher, along with poetry.

Poetry and philosophy were otherwise seen as two different things altogether, but from the time of even Coleridge, he is also a philosopher when he is writing criticism. There is a philosophy at work which influenced him, European philosophy, Kant influenced him majorly in all his compositions.

So these connections between literature and many other disciplines, including philosophy, and archaeology, they all become very fluid at that time. You cannot engage with literature as, “pure literature”, from the Romantic period onwards, we begin to realise that there is nothing about preserving this purity at all. You need to go out of these many boundaries, including the national boundaries, including the political boundaries and including the boundaries of faith, which is what his observation on Milton also highlights.

*Paradise Lost* is a text that draws upon the Bible. But when you look at it in an aesthetic sense, Shelley says, Satan becomes a better moral being than God himself. That is the irony which the Romantic Movement, the Romantic critical framework also promotes and sustains quite efficiently in the years to come, in the many centuries to come.

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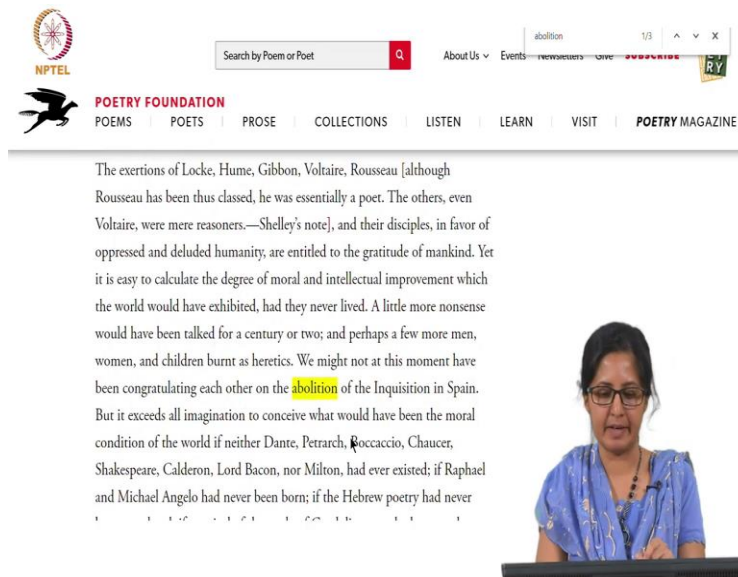
The image shows a screenshot of the Poetry Foundation website. At the top left is the NPTEL logo. The main navigation bar includes 'Search by Poem or Poet', 'About Us', 'Events', 'Resources', and 'Careers'. A search bar contains the word 'abolition'. Below the navigation bar is a horizontal menu with 'POETRY FOUNDATION', 'POEMS', 'POETS', 'PROSE', 'COLLECTIONS', 'LISTEN', 'LEARN', 'VISIT', and 'POETRY MAGAZINE'. The main content area features a quote: 'The production and assurance of pleasure in this highest sense is true utility. Those who produce and preserve this pleasure are poets or poetical philosophers.' Below this is another quote: 'The exertions of Locke, Hume, Gibbon, Voltaire, Rousseau (although Rousseau has been thus classed, he was essentially a poet. The others, even Voltaire, were mere reasoners.—Shelley's note), and their disciples, in favor of oppressed and deluded humanity, are entitled to the gratitude of mankind. Yet it is easy to calculate the degree of moral and intellectual improvement which the world would have exhibited, had they never lived. A little more nonsense would have been talked for a century or two; and perhaps a few more men, women, and children burnt as heretics. We might not at this moment have been congratulating each other on the abolition of the Inquisition in Spain.' A video player is visible in the bottom right corner, showing a woman reading.

So, this blurring of these genres and these discourses, they continue to dominate this text. “The exertions of Locke, Hume, Gibbon, Voltaire, Rousseau (although Rousseau has thus been

classed, he was essentially a poet. The others, even Voltaire, were mere reasoners)”- so this is a note that Shelley had given, which has been inserted into the text now, this is a note that he has given to classify Rousseau also as a literary artist.

So within the same person, we find there is a political revolutionary as well as a poet who is at work.

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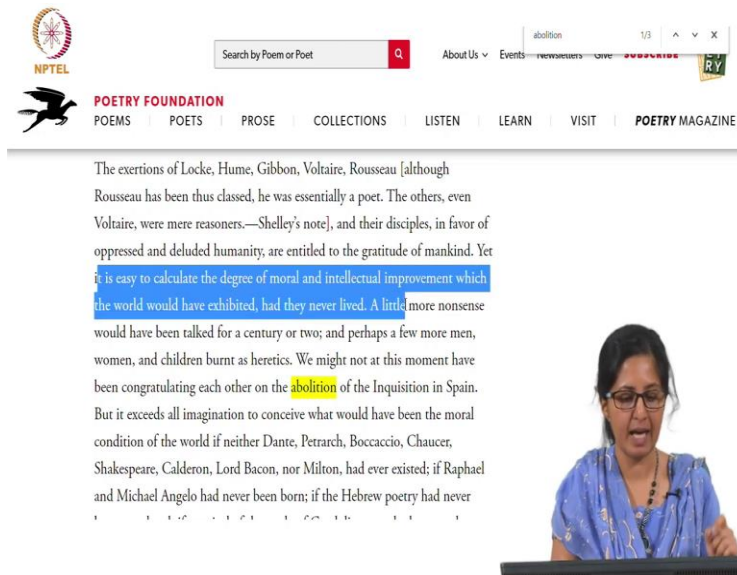


The screenshot shows the Poetry Foundation website. At the top left is the NPTEL logo. A search bar contains the text "abolition" and "1/3". Below the search bar is the Poetry Foundation logo and a navigation menu with links for POEMS, POETS, PROSE, COLLECTIONS, LISTEN, LEARN, VISIT, and POETRY MAGAZINE. The main content area displays a text excerpt: "The exertions of Locke, Hume, Gibbon, Voltaire, Rousseau [although Rousseau has been thus classed, he was essentially a poet. The others, even Voltaire, were mere reasoners.—Shelley's note], and their disciples, in favor of oppressed and deluded humanity, are entitled to the gratitude of mankind. Yet it is easy to calculate the degree of moral and intellectual improvement which the world would have exhibited, had they never lived. A little more nonsense would have been talked for a century or two; and perhaps a few more men, women, and children burnt as heretics. We might not at this moment have been congratulating each other on the abolition of the Inquisition in Spain. But it exceeds all imagination to conceive what would have been the moral condition of the world if neither Dante, Petrarch, Boccaccio, Chaucer, Shakespeare, Calderon, Lord Bacon, nor Milton, had ever existed; if Raphael and Michael Angelo had never been born; if the Hebrew poetry had never". A video inset shows a woman with glasses speaking.

Now, he moves on to what I think is the most cardinal point that he is trying to make in this entire piece of writing. “Yet, it is easy to calculate the degree of moral and intellectual empowerment, which the world would have exhibited had they never lived”.



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The screenshot shows the Poetry Foundation website. At the top left is the NPTEL logo. A search bar contains the text 'abolition'. Below the search bar is a navigation menu with links for POEMS, POETS, PROSE, COLLECTIONS, LISTEN, LEARN, VISIT, and POETRY MAGAZINE. The main content area displays a quote from Shelley's 'The Exiles' with several words highlighted in yellow and blue. A video inset on the right shows a woman with glasses speaking.

The exertions of Locke, Hume, Gibbon, Voltaire, Rousseau [although Rousseau has been thus classed, he was essentially a poet. The others, even Voltaire, were mere reasoners.—Shelley's note], and their disciples, in favor of oppressed and deluded humanity, are entitled to the gratitude of mankind. Yet it is easy to calculate the degree of moral and intellectual improvement which the world would have exhibited, had they never lived. A little more nonsense would have been talked for a century or two; and perhaps a few more men, women, and children burnt as heretics. We might not at this moment have been congratulating each other on the abolition of the Inquisition in Spain. But it exceeds all imagination to conceive what would have been the moral condition of the world if neither Dante, Petrarch, Boccaccio, Chaucer, Shakespeare, Calderon, Lord Bacon, nor Milton, had ever existed; if Raphael and Michael Angelo had never been born; if the Hebrew poetry had never

So far the defence had been about defending the presence of these, defending the writings of these people who are these literary artists. Now he is talking about the possibility of a world where these writings were not there at all. So what would have been the result? “A little more nonsense would have been talked for a century or two, and perhaps a few more men, women and children burned as heretics”. Very straightforward.

If these people were not there, if poetry were not there, if these sort of artistic manifestations were not there, this is what you have. Had this been a theocratic state, had this been a state ruled by a series of monarchs without paying attention to what is being culturally transmitted, what is being literarily transmitted, then more of nonsense and more of burning people as heretics.

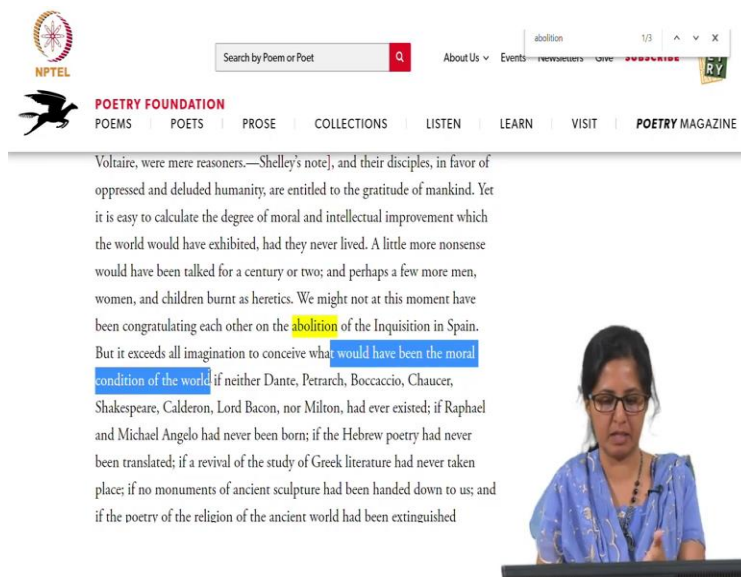
And he draws, this is a very pointed attack over here. “We might not, at this moment, have been congratulating each other on the abolition of the Inquisition in Spain”. This happened, the Inquisition in Spain is something, which went on for more than a century, it was a very Catholic kind of thing to continue to burn people as heretics and it was a very legal thing to do as well.

So that comes to an end, I think, in 1834, or something, that is during the time when England was proclaiming itself as this very progressive, modern democracy which also had begun to show its lenience upon, as colonisers, they were trying to be very different compared to the rest of Europe.

So he is now capitalizing on that moral superiority, on the political superiority that England has and he tells them, we would not be congratulating each other on this occasion when the Inquisition is being abolished in Spain. Because we would have perhaps become worse than Spain, if we did not have these sort of things to aid us, Locke, Hume, Gibbon, Voltaire, Rousseau, poetry. So a defence of poetry becomes very pertinent over here, it becomes useful more than any other kinds of writings, more than religious writings, more than philosophical writings, more than political writings, poetry becomes useful. Forget about the need to defend poetry, it becomes the most useful thing ever produced.

And now, he says, “But it exceeds all imagination to conceive, what would have been the

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The screenshot shows the Poetry Foundation website. At the top left is the NPTEL logo. A search bar contains the text 'abolition'. Below the search bar is the Poetry Foundation logo and a navigation menu with links for POEMS, POETS, PROSE, COLLECTIONS, LISTEN, LEARN, VISIT, and POETRY MAGAZINE. The main content area displays a quote from Shelley's note: 'Voltaire, were mere reasoners.—Shelley's note], and their disciples, in favor of oppressed and deluded humanity, are entitled to the gratitude of mankind. Yet it is easy to calculate the degree of moral and intellectual improvement which the world would have exhibited, had they never lived. A little more nonsense would have been talked for a century or two; and perhaps a few more men, women, and children burnt as heretics. We might not at this moment have been congratulating each other on the abolition of the Inquisition in Spain. But it exceeds all imagination to conceive what would have been the moral condition of the world if neither Dante, Petrarch, Boccaccio, Chaucer, Shakespeare, Calderon, Lord Bacon, nor Milton, had ever existed; if Raphael and Michael Angelo had never been born; if the Hebrew poetry had never been translated; if a revival of the study of Greek literature had never taken place; if no monuments of ancient sculpture had been handed down to us; and if the poetry of the religion of the ancient world had been extinguished'. A video player is visible on the right side of the screenshot, showing a woman with glasses speaking.

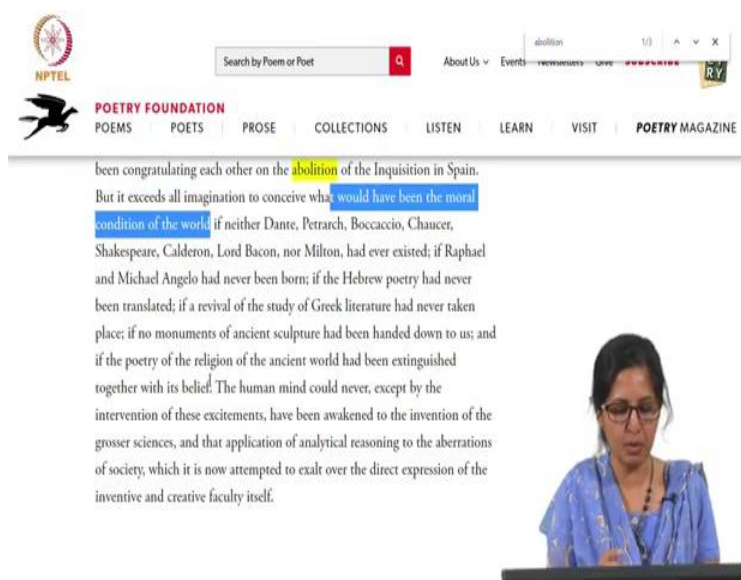
moral condition of the world if these people”, we’ll come to that. So thus far, when Sidney was defending, doing his apology for poetry, at that time, his contention was, I hope you are able to see how the argument gets reversed.

Sidney wanted to prove to the world that poets are not doing anything, he was very defensive in that sense. This is actually not a defensive sort of defence. Sidney had to protect the poets and say that, see, this evil, these vices were always there, the poets have not really claimed to say any truth, they have not claimed to do anything, so please do not accuse them of being liars either.

So here, it is the other way around. He is talking about the entire absence of this faculty of imagination and what would have happened to humanity if all of these people were wiped out of the earth? What would have been the moral condition of the world if neither Dante, Petrarch, Boccaccio, Chaucer, Shakespeare, Calderon, Lord Bacon, nor Milton had ever existed?

You also find, it is a very transnational kind of defence that he builds up. He is not defending English poetry. He is defending the poets who wrote about different things at different points of time, and who never had occupied the same ideological position at any given point of time. That is also the liberation that the critical movement, Romantic critical movement opens up. Look at the other things he says. “If Raphael and Michael Angelo had never been born, if the Hebrew poetry had never been translated,

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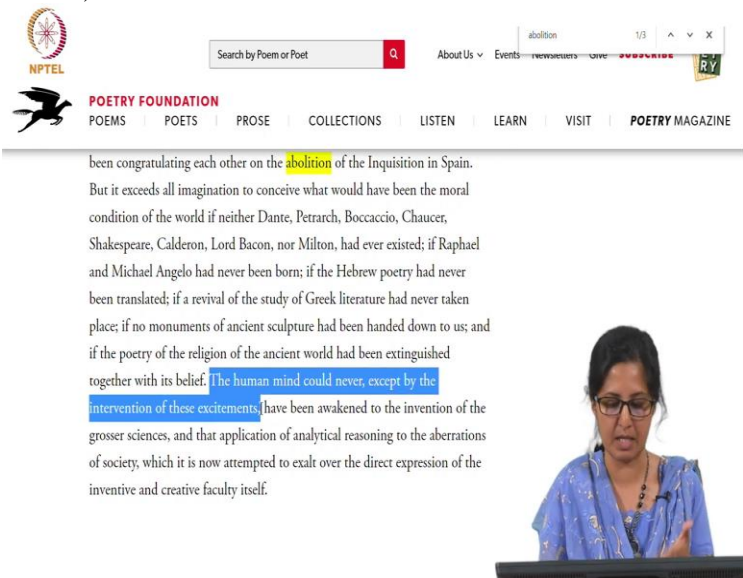


The image shows a screenshot of the Poetry Foundation website. The search bar contains the word "abolition". The search results display a snippet of text from a poem, with several phrases highlighted in blue: "abolition of the Inquisition in Spain", "would have been the moral condition of the world", and "if neither Dante, Petrarch, Boccaccio, Chaucer, Shakespeare, Calderon, Lord Bacon, nor Milton, had ever existed; if Raphael and Michael Angelo had never been born; if the Hebrew poetry had never been translated; if a revival of the study of Greek literature had never taken place; if no monuments of ancient sculpture had been handed down to us; and if the poetry of the religion of the ancient world had been extinguished together with its belief". Below the text, there is a video player showing a woman with glasses and a blue patterned top speaking.

if a revival of the study of Greek literature had never taken place, if no monuments of ancient sculpture have been handed down to us, and if the poetry of the religion of the ancient world had been extinguished, together with its belief”. Look at the things which are being brought together, different ideological things, antiquity and modernity together, different genres, different disciplines, he is defending the faculty of imagination over here, if you notice.

He is defending not particular works and particular authors, but the quality of imagination, which had made all of these things possible. “The human mind could never, except by the intervention of these excitements,”

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The image shows a screenshot of the Poetry Foundation website. At the top left is the NPTEL logo. The main navigation bar includes 'POETRY FOUNDATION' and links for 'POEMS', 'POETS', 'PROSE', 'COLLECTIONS', 'LISTEN', 'LEARN', 'VISIT', and 'POETRY MAGAZINE'. A search bar contains the word 'abolition'. Below the navigation bar, a paragraph of text is displayed, with several phrases highlighted in blue: 'abolition of the Inquisition in Spain', 'The human mind could never, except by the intervention of these excitements', and 'have been awakened to the invention of the grosser sciences, and that application of analytical reasoning to the aberrations of society, which it is now attempted to exalt over the direct expression of the inventive and creative faculty itself.' To the right of the text is a video frame showing a woman with glasses and a blue patterned top speaking.

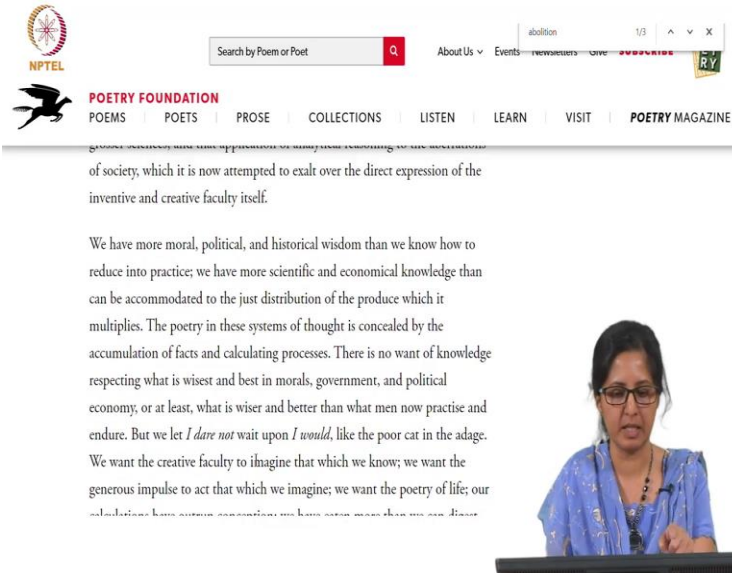
-these are positive words now over here- “except by the intervention of these excitements have been awakened to the invention of the grosser sciences, and that application of analytical reasoning to the aberrations of society, which it is now attempted to exalt over the direct expression of the inventive and creative faculty itself”.

It is a very audacious way of defending poetry and by large, by extension, the faculty of imagination itself. He is referring to the other things, the other useful things as grosser sciences, the application of analytical reasoning to the aberrations of society. He talks about other sciences as different means through which many aberrations in the society are being justified, industrialisation, and that is only the beginning.

And later on, we know that most of the modern analytical tools are also about justifying certain evils in the society, which of course, the society also, it is a vicious kind of relationship, from which the society also gains a lot. We will not go into the details of this.

So, this is the kind of rhetoric that becomes possible from this period onwards. We will wrap up with this as of now.

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So, if you could continue reading on this, and the final section is on the divine quality of poetry. And as we can already double guess it, he is not really talking about divine in the sense that we have understood divine so far. He will be talking about the divine quality of poetry in order to show that how poetry, forget about being an immoral influence on the society, that is the only thing which can save the society.

And this rhetoric also continues as we can see even during the Victorian period when faith crumbles, when this dichotomy between faith and science happens over there and suddenly there is this realisation, what were we eventually fighting about, what were we essentially thinking about when we were relying our hope on faith or on science. And poetry at that time, we find that it is being presented as this, human emotions in general are being presented as the panacea for all of these evils which were otherwise seen as very utilitarian compared to poetry.

So we will wrap up with this today. Please continue reading. And I think we should be able to complete this text by tomorrow with a discussion on the general Romantic trends, and then we will move on to the Victorian thing as well.